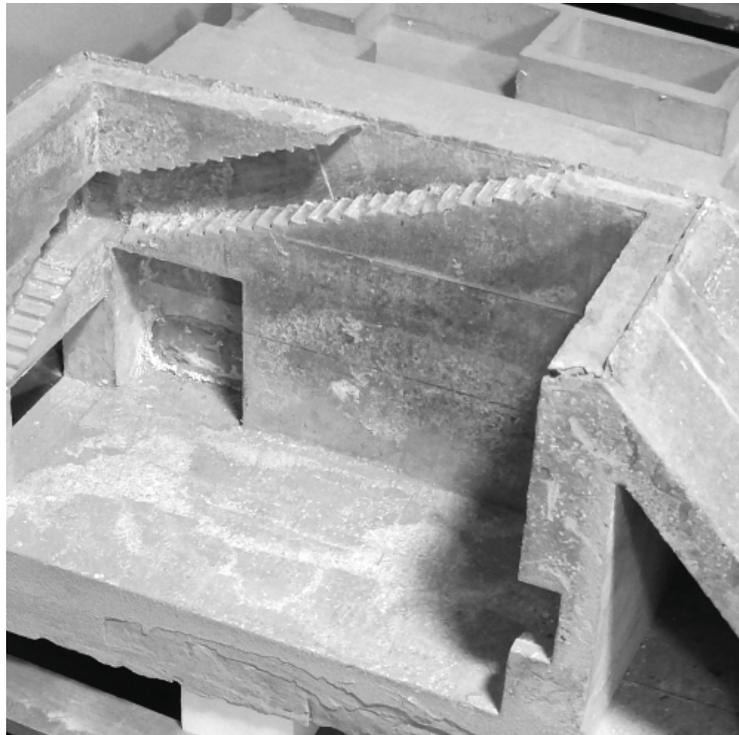


FRAGMENT

02



TRANSFORMATION vs. PRESERVATION



PWFERRETTO STUDIO
SNU_DAAE

CONTENT

PROLOGUE

Fragment

INTRODUCTION

Transformation vs. Preservation

WANG SHU

Articles: Structures of Everyday Life, ArtForum November 2013

PROJECT

Outline

TRAVEL

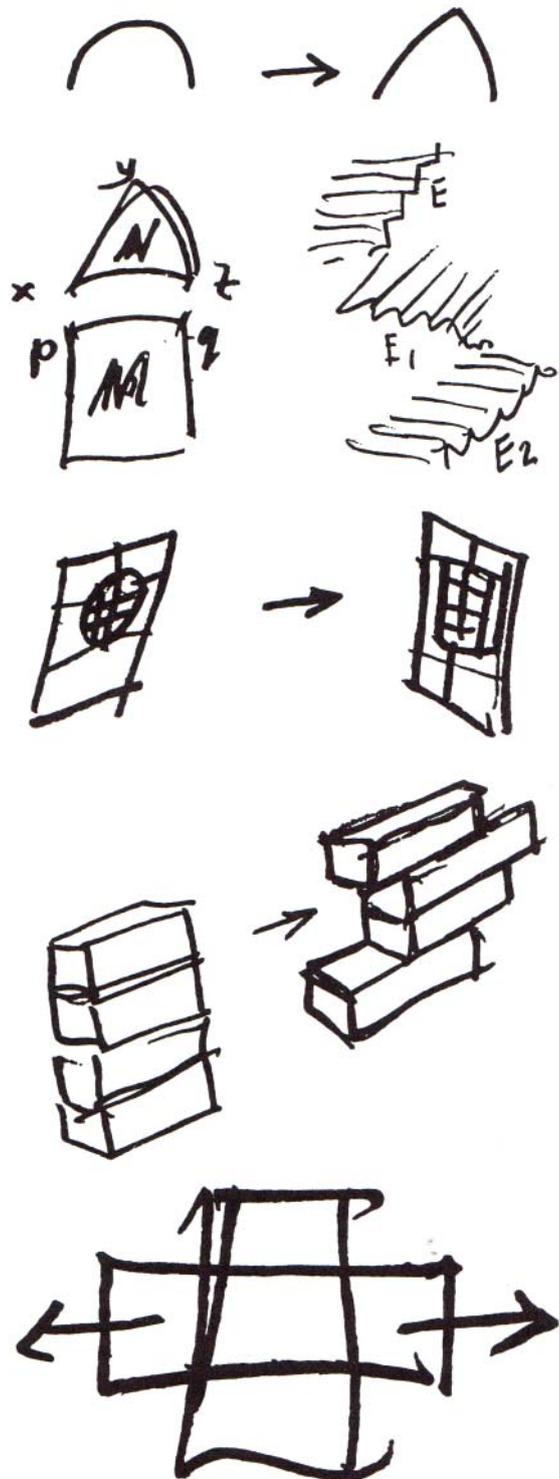
Trip to China Details

TRIP

Itinerary of the Hangzhou Trip

SITE

Reading List



SERGEI EISENSTEIN
SKETCHES

PROLOGUE

FRAGMENT

Almost everything we know about the past comes from physical and narrative fragments. Yet a fragment is not simply the static part of a once-whole thing. It is itself something in motion over time, manifesting successively or variously as object, evidence, concept, and condition.

Adorno, Theodor W.

An idea is a thought. It's that thought that holds more than you think it does when you receive it. But in that first moment there is a spark. In a comic strip, if someone gets an idea, a light bulb goes on. It happens in an instant, just as in life.

It would be great if the entire film came all at once. But it comes, for me, in fragments. That first fragment is like the Rosetta stone. It's a piece of a puzzle that indicates the rest. It's a hope puzzle piece.

In "Blue Velvet", it was red lips, green lawns, and the song – Bobby Vinton's version of Blue Velvet. The next thing was an ear lying in the field. And that was it. You fall in love with the first idea, that little tiny piece. And once you're got it, the rest will come in time.

David Lynch

The shot is by no means an element of montage. The shot is a montage cell.

Just as cells in their division from a phenomenon of another order, the organism or embryo, so, on the other side of the dialectic leap from the shot, there is montage.

By what, then, is montage characterized and, consequently, its cells – the shot? By collision. By the conflict of two pieces in opposition to each other. By conflict. By conflict.

In front of me lies a crumpled yellowed sheet of paper. On it is a mysterious note: 'Linkage—Page' and 'collision—E'. This is a substantial trace of a heated bout on the subject of montage between P (Pudovkin) and E (myself).

Sergei Eisenstein



TRANSFORMATION
CARLO SCARPA

INTRODUCTION

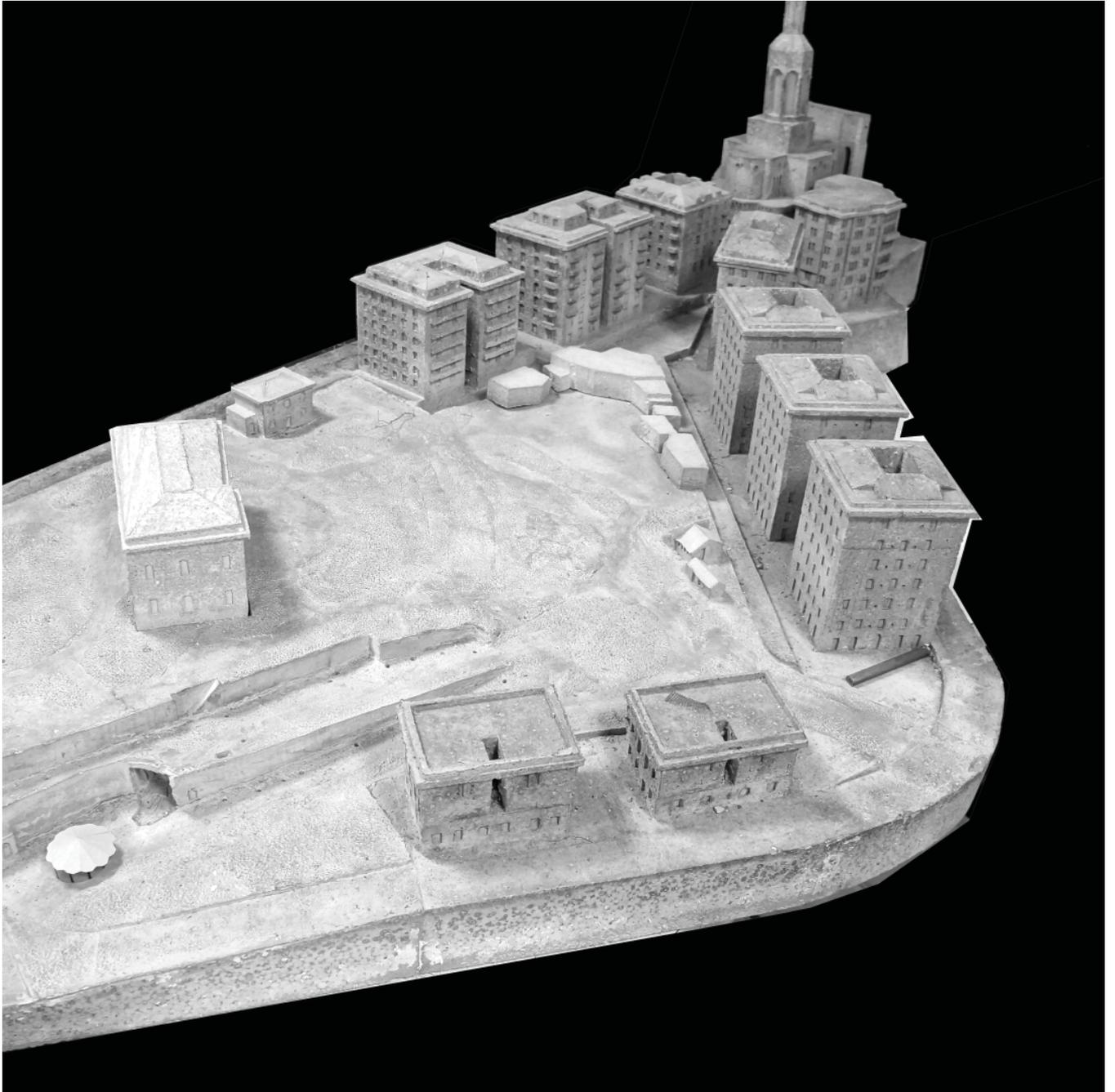
The notion of Tabula Rasa, for so often the preferred form of urban development in most Asian cities, is rapidly being questioned on the grounds of eradicating the traces of historical development. No country testifies to this eradication of local heritage more than China in the last 30 years with their aggressive economic policies..

For this reason, our joint 4.1 Design Studio will be based in Hangzhou, China. Our Department has decided that all students should at least once in their 5 years undergraduate studies work on a design project that is outside of Korea. The first semester of the Fourth year has been allocated as the right studio to carry out this project. The aim of the project is to subject SNU students to foreign conditions and absorb different cultures, as to better prepare them for an ever changing profession where as graduate architects they will be expected to work in a multitude of various situations.

Hangzhou, the capitol Zhejiang Province in Eastern China and has a long history of over 2000 years including being the capitol of the Southern Song Dynasty in 1132. In recent years it has become the home to the renowned Chinese architect Wang Shu, who in 2012 won the prestigious Pritzker prize with the work of his office Amateur Architecture that can be characterized by an increased awareness of the local, both in learning from existing typologies and reusing existing materials.

Each professor will have their own specific agenda but will be working on the same site in Hangzhou. We have provisionally selected one site but will confirm the site when we visit in third week of March.

The trip to china is compulsory for all students and for this reason the department has generously decide to support 50% of the trip per student.



PRESERVATION
REMEMBERING NOT FORGETTING

TRANSFORMATION VS. PRESERVATION

The room is the bagging of architecture. It is the place of the mind. You in the rooms with its dimensions, its structure, its light respond to its character, its spiritual aura, recognizing that whatever the human proposes and makes becomes a life.

Louis Kahn

“The Room, the Street, and the Human Agreement”

Demolition is not the only option for using things again. Using and reusing is like thinking and rethinking things. Architecture is no more than a way to seeing reality. You never start from scratch. Any building that has managed to survive the passage of time is by definition, a continuous transformation.

The city is laden with sites which are pregnant with information about mutations that have accumulated over years. Complex transformations that are constantly describing what use to be and what is now.

Cities don't possess a predetermined DNA. The encrypted genetic log of the city is not encapsulated in the synthetic determination of a spiral DNA, rather it is written and rewritten constantly:- endlessly filling the empty instant between past and future.

Remembering not forgetting

The decision of what to remember and what to forget is a crucial part of designing, do you celebrate or bury; consecrate or erase?



WANG SHU
NINGBO HISTORY MUSEUM

WANG SHU

STRUCTURES OF EVERY DAY LIFE_COLE ROSKAM ON THE ARCHITECTURE OF WANG SHU

FIVE YEARS AFTER THE COLOSSAL PAGEANTRY of the 2008 Beijing Olympics, Chinese architecture continues to aim for awe. And if the spectacle of the games was accompanied, even enabled, by a showy physical reinvention of the nation's capital, that unprecedented integration of technical and financial bravado is still reverberating in other equally audacious ventures around the country. Projects such as the Shanghai Tower, set to become China's tallest building upon completion in 2014, or Changsha's Sky City—a proposal for the world's tallest building, which was initially intended to be entirely constructed in only 210 days—embody the scale, ambition, and sheer force of the country's inextricably intertwined economic and physical development.

Indeed, most outside observers understand China's relentless architectural ascent as emblematic of the degree to which China's potent strain of party-led, autocratic capitalism has come to dominate the nation's cultural production. But a counternarrative has recently become equally prevalent within China itself—one that sees architecture as an increasingly autonomous discipline. In this view, architecture is that rare domain that offers the potential for social critique without directly opposing the ideological machinations of the state.¹ Given architecture's emergence as a prominent force in contemporary Chinese cultural expression, questions concerning its future trajectory have become imbued with an urgency that underscores the complexities surrounding the pace and nature of the country's continued development.

Nowhere is the paradox of Chinese architecture more apparent than in the reception of the work of Wang Shu. The Hangzhou-based designer's 2012 Pritzker Prize—the first awarded to a Chinese national—has been simultaneously interpreted by the foreign press as evidence of “architectural dissidence” and “a celebration of the [Chinese] government.” That such appraisals can coexist reveals the impasse generated by these two seemingly irreconcilable readings of the state of Chinese architecture today.² At the same time, the confused reception of Wang's Pritzker win presents an opportunity for a more nuanced exploration of China's architectural culture, eschewing party-centric dichotomies of complicity or resistance.

In explaining their decision, the Pritzker Prize jury cited the raw tactility of Wang's buildings, their almost unprecedented foregrounding of materiality. Wang's engagement with traditional materials and building techniques, perhaps most famously expressed in the masonry facade of his Ningbo History Museum, completed in 2008, has garnered particular international acclaim. There, his use of bricks and mortar pushes beyond architecture's penchant for saddling materials with the impossible semiotic or phenomenological burden of registering the particulars of place—as if simply using local materials could tie a building meaningfully to its site. Wang's work insists that when we talk about material, we're really talking about the far-flung and complex economic and social systems required for their fabrication, the cultural and political factors at play in their re-presentation as architecture, and the agency they achieve through subsequent reception and interpretation.

Questions of material are not only at the very heart of Wang's practice—they are key to China's recent development. As we're reminded daily, the nation has become the epicenter of both contemporary architectural production and globalized industrial manufacturing. That convergence has catalyzed a series of profound social shifts, including the largest migration in human history, as a formerly rural population of agricultural laborers is transformed into an urbanized industrial workforce. Architecture has played an obvious and operative role in this dramatic refashioning of entire landscapes and, with them, ways of life. Local cultures, and particularly local modes of production—including techniques for building—are changing, as are the structures and substances that have literally embodied them. Wang's commitment to materiality and his investigation of the corporeal and representational implications of craft suggest that architecture might not just be a symptom of China's ongoing transformations but could transform them in turn.



GIVEN THE IMMENSE CULTURAL and political weight with which Chinese architecture is now burdened, it seems incredible that the discipline virtually disappeared during the Cultural Revolution of 1966–76. The era's fervent ideological bent rendered architecture an affluent, bourgeois pursuit. It was largely replaced by the hard science of engineering and the physical act of construction, culminating in on-site collaborations known as *san jiahe*, or “three-in-one combinations”: building teams consisting of government cadres, construction workers, and building technicians. Architecture was only able to reclaim its footing and its legitimacy in the years following Mao's death in 1976.

And so the country's major architecture departments, including those at Tsinghua University in Beijing, Tianjin University, Tongji University in Shanghai, and the Nanjing Institute of Technology (now known as Southeast University), would reconstitute themselves two years later, in 1978, coinciding with the first round of post-Mao economic reforms. That same year, I. M. Pei opened the door for foreign architectural practices to enter China for the first time since 1949, through his involvement in an international consortium of investors and developers organized to produce what would become the Fragrant Hill Hotel, a postmodern complex outside Beijing inspired by southern Chinese vernacular style.

The completion of Pei's surprisingly ornamental project in 1982 came the year after Wang's enrollment in the Nanjing Institute of Technology, where he met his future wife and professional partner, Lu Wenyu. Born in 1963 in the semiautonomous northwestern region of Xinjiang to a musician and amateur carpenter father and a librarian mother, Wang arrived in Nanjing at the beginning of a sea change in Chinese architecture. Although few if any Chinese buildings from the 1980s have attracted significant attention, many of the country's most prominent architectural thinkers and producers came of age during that period. As the decade began, students and long-suffering faculty suddenly found themselves largely freed from the state's stifling ideological shackles and awash in a deluge of previously forbidden international stimulation. Heated debate ensued over when, how, and whether China should relate its own reemerging architectural discourse to that of Europe and America. Did China require more substantial engagement with the lessons of midcentury modernism and the work of by-then-canonical practitioners like Le Corbusier or Mies? Or could the country's architects jump straight into postmodernism, following a shift that was by then largely a *fait accompli* in the West, thanks to architects such as Robert Venturi and Michael Graves? Alternatively, should foreign influences be avoided altogether in favor of a revitalization of China's traditional architectural lexicon? If at first glance such academic posturing might seem insular and innocuous, these questions were, in fact, loaded with political import: Not only did they suggest a new autonomy for the discipline, but, in acknowledging that Chinese architecture had fallen behind that of the West, they implicitly critiqued the party's devastating attempts to reinforce its own political power through the repressive cultural reforms initiated under Mao.

An eager if uncertain scramble for answers led to surprising compressions of time and space. In 1980, China's most prominent architectural journal, *Jianzhu xuebao*, called postmodernism “the new modernism” before a subsequent issue corrected the mistranslation.³ The first full Chinese edition of Le Corbusier's 1921 modernist classic *Vers une Architecture* (published in English as *Towards a New Architecture in 1927*) appeared in 1981, just five years before the Chinese-language edition of critic Charles Jencks's enormously influential 1977 polemic *The Language of Post-modern Architecture*. Neither was particularly well translated, and with few Maoist-era faculty capable of effectively guiding students through interpretations of then-de rigueur foreign architectural discourse, students were left to seek the counsel of retired professors trained abroad prior to World War II, who represented China's last officially encouraged engagement with Western architectural theory. Post-1978 distribution of this generation's own pre-1949 research, which had been shelved for decades in the name of ideological circumspection, contributed to the era's uncanny convergences of pre- and postrevolution, modern and postmodern, Chinese and foreign architectural discourses.

While modernism and postmodernism thus became available to Chinese architecture students almost simultaneously, many of them—including Wang—ultimately rejected modernism's strict understanding of form as an index of function, which offered little more than a recapitulation of China's prereform, socialist design methodology. A more postmodern approach that emphasized architectural form as a kind of cultural language—of given signifiers and icons to be recombined at will—presented the theoretical underpinning necessary to resurrect China's own imperial-era building traditions, while postmodernism's historical and literary emphasis nicely echoed the concurrent rediscovery of the rich and neglected history of China's literati.⁴ It also suggested some cultural equivalence with then-current trends in Europe, the US, and



Japan. Suddenly, Chinese architecture could be seen as a semiotic system liberated from the party's own ideological framework, thereby affirming the validity of traditional customs, practices, and forms while suggesting their potential for renewed significance within contemporary Chinese culture. All this is why Wang professes to draw on everything from exquisite Ming- and Qing-dynasty Jiangnan garden typology, to China's early-twentieth-century engagement with rationalized beaux-arts planning models, to Zong Bing (AD 375–443), one of China's first landscape painters—an omnivorous ambition that runs throughout his work.

Following graduation in 1988, Wang became a professor of architecture at the China Academy of Art in Hangzhou (then called the Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts). His first major commission, for a youth recreation center in Haining, Zhejiang Province, begun in 1989 and completed in 1990, reveals an enthusiastic if unresolved interest in the notion that architecture could comprise a grammar capable of manipulation via material, structure, and form. The building's program—composed of a gym, a dance studio, classrooms, and a day-care facility—is divided into two major masses. The gym is located on the ground floor of the first, with the day-care center above it, while the other volume incorporates classrooms, offices, and the studio. These are bound together by a large central core, painted bright red, which contains a complex series of circulatory systems, including two unusually arranged circular stairways and a more conventional stairwell. Three massive horizontal beams interpenetrate the building's three volumes, visually lashing them together. One actually pushes through a window, generating an aggressive tension between structure, form, and function that both challenges and reinforces the building's purpose as a site for extracurricular play.

Wang's unruly beams and ludic forms were daring and innovative—all the more so when considered in the context of China's economic and political dislocations at the time. Even after the debates of the '80s, many buildings were still copied from books of preexisting models, and massive, state-run institutes staffed by anonymous teams of architects were still responsible for the majority of the country's depressingly rote building designs. Yet in many respects, the Haining project echoes formal experiments in “cardboard architecture” promoted by Peter Eisenman over a decade earlier, which explored production as a process more of conceptual design than of material fabrication.

AFTER A HANDFUL OF smaller commissions at the end of the decade, Wang abruptly changed course, departing from his conceptual investigations. In fact, he dropped out of the architectural profession entirely, embarking on a period of self-imposed exile that has since become mythologized, both in China and abroad, as his first substantial immersion in the nature of traditional Chinese building culture. Between 1990 and 1997, Wang removed himself from the professional system in order to learn the practice of vernacular construction techniques, such as rammed earth, timber, and masonry construction, from craftsmen in and around Hangzhou. The sabbatical, financially enabled by Lu, allowed Wang to gradually reconcile his own lingering interest in the avant-garde with the market-driven development beginning to exert increasing pressure upon his field. By the early '90s, the first wave of land reforms had emphatically transformed building into business, leaving architectural design hovering awkwardly between a cultural pursuit that fed nostalgia for China's rapidly disappearing past and a catalyst for economic speculation ushering in its future.

In 1997, Wang and Lu founded Amateur Architecture Studio, their chosen name indicating uneasiness over the implications of professional status in their newly reconfigured discipline. Wang's relationship to architectural practice was, at this point, clearly complicated, as evinced by his decision to enroll in a Ph.D. program at Tongji University in concurrence with the firm's founding. There he completed a dissertation titled “The Fictional City” in 2000. The sprawling study builds upon earlier postmodern notions of architectural and urban form as signs. Specifically, Wang followed the approach promoted by Italian architect Aldo Rossi—whose 1966 *Architecture of the City* attempted to “dispossess, reassociate and thus transform real places and real times”—mining the historical evolution of the urban environment for ostensibly timeless and universal architectural forms that could embody a kind of collective architectural memory.⁵ Rossi's dual quest for the timeless and the new, a tabula rasa that nevertheless reinvigorated tradition, resonated with Wang's own search for an architectural syntax—rooted in historical urban forms and traditional architectural techniques—through which China's bewildering urban upheaval might be more deeply understood and even challenged.

Under the lingering influence of Rossi, Wang faced a seemingly impossible task: to merge a long-standing interest in the cultural and mnemonic power of form with brute stuff—the complex realities of architecture's material realization that Wang had encountered during his



time with the craftsmen of Hangzhou. So Wang and Lu set out to pit the solidity of overtly tectonic constructions, basic building forms visibly shaped by processes of making, against the dematerialized, abstracted economic forces enveloping the country. In this way, they confronted a duality that both Jencks and Fredric Jameson have famously described as the distinction between the brick, a physical index of the static, unit-by-unit measurability of architectural production, and the balloon, or the voluminous, curtain wall–enclosed expanses that came to define the spaces of late capitalism.⁶

This opposition would become dramatically visible in the duo’s most famous project to date, the Ningbo History Museum, and its much-discussed masonry facade in particular. In an ironic nod to the museum’s program, which is devoted to Ningbo’s history and folk culture, Wang and Lu’s building is constructed from bricks harvested from the demolished remains of the approximately thirty villages originally located on the site, which was rezoned by Ningbo officials to accommodate a massive new public square fronted by the museum and two government office complexes. The scale of construction required several teams of laborers, resulting in a tapestry of techniques that undercuts any essentialization of the work as some singular expression of Chinese regionalism. Instead, sections of the architecture’s brick- and tile-work compete with each other for prominence, inscribing the entire facade with a taut and unresolved energy stemming from the process of building itself. The vertiginous patchwork thus performs, indexes, and monumentalizes the complex dynamics between labor and development in China today. It emphasizes the vast scale of waste involved in urban renewal by paradoxically channeling that surfeit into form, an articulation of the pragmatism and thrift that new party leadership is desperately trying to establish after years of official excess. So while the building was enabled by the cycles of demolition and redevelopment that now grip all of China’s cities, it also stands as a pointed and poignant trace of these processes.

Yet for all of the international attention deservedly heaped upon the museum, there has been surprisingly little written about its interior spaces. Wang himself has described the building as a kind of artificial hill, and though there is certainly something uniquely topographical to the gradual slope and texture of its monolithic form, this characterization also reveals the architect’s own discomfort with what is happening behind the building’s celebrated facade. Like his first project, the museum is organized around two central masses, both of which consist primarily of galleries wrapped by tangled strands of circulation. It is the approach to and passages within the building, rather than the spaces to which these approaches lead, that mark the museum’s most interesting moments, largely because they offer the most direct confrontation with the structure’s raw materiality. These trajectories include several wide sets of stairs defined by a staggered series of balustrades that lead viewers to each of the museum’s main exhibition halls, and escalators that allow visitors to bypass the exhibitions in favor of the roof. There, a series of paths cleave the building into thick chunks, enabling an intimate study of the building’s detailed if indiscriminate masonry patterning.

THE SECRET OF WANG’S DEFT ENTWINEMENT of humble material and soaring monumentality, physical labor and economic critique, lies in the brick itself. Although it is often overshadowed by the country’s more celebrated legacy of wooden architecture, brick is one of China’s oldest construction materials. Historically molded by anonymous laborers, the finished product was paradoxically endowed with surprising individuality—largely thanks to its coloring, which varied according to the composition of available clay and so revealed its regional origins. This differentiation was reinforced by stamps imprinted on each brick’s surface to identify its founding workshop. But these local ecologies of production have been gradually subsumed by standardized manufacturing techniques, resulting in the reduction of a rich array of regional shapes, sizes, and colors into one basic red-clay variety. This shift captures the kind of de-skilling increasingly enveloping the country as localized craft gives way to urbanized industrial production.

Over the last fifteen years, in fact, a number of Chinese architects and artists alike have employed the brick as a measurable unit of quantifiable productivity in ways that both exploit and overcome its utilitarian origin, transforming it from a stable or permanent building block into a gauge of things lost and gained. In *Souvenir from Beijing*, 2002, Ai Weiwei enclosed a brick salvaged from a destroyed traditional courtyard home in a box made from timber from a demolished temple, creating a hybrid artifact of loss. Wang Wei’s 2003 installation *Temporary Space* featured local laborers who were paid first to deliver twenty-five thousand bricks from Beijing’s outskirts to the Long March Space gallery in the city’s 798 Art District, then to use them to construct a four-walled enclosure in the center of the gallery, and finally to tear the structure down immediately following its completion. The bricks were bought for 0.13 RMB



each (approximately one penny in 2003 currency values), only to be sold back to the workers for 0.05 RMB.⁷ Here, the intrinsic value of immaterial labor confronts the hard currency of material construction, reenacting the seemingly endless, irrational flows and conversions dictating China's reinvention.

This collective emphasis on the brick—not merely as localized object but as signifier of time, work, and worth—also resonates in the recent spate of materially grounded architectural work in China. Wang's Ningbo History Museum continues to receive the most international acclaim, but figures and firms such as Yung Ho Chang, Liu Jiakun, Zhang Lei, Zhao Yang, Standard architecture, Meng Yan of Urbanus, and Trace Architecture Office (TAO), among many others, are all using concrete, brick, stone, and wood to explore the equivocal conditions of contemporary Chinese architectural practice by intervening in and even disrupting the very processes of modernization that enabled architecture's own development as a discipline in China. Urbanus's Tulou building, for example, deploys a form based upon massive, traditional rammed-earth constructions in an attempt to provide high-quality, low-income housing for China's ever-expanding migrant labor population, while the Gaoligong Museum of Handicraft Paper, designed by TAO in Xinzhuang, Yunnan Province, celebrates a dying handicraft with a series of simple wooden studios.

This reactivation of the brick is inseparable from modern architecture's own conflicted and somewhat obscured history with the material. Modernism may call to mind visions of sleek steel and glass, but the brick was also there all along. None other than Frank Lloyd Wright emphasized the astonishing contrast between the brick's value as a commodity and its utility as a construction material, purportedly beginning a public lecture by asking the audience whether they knew what a brick was, and then answering: "It is a small, worthless, ordinary thing that costs 11 cents but has a wonderful quality. Give me a brick and it becomes worth its weight in gold."⁸

Wright's appraisal is echoed in the incongruities of the Ningbo History Museum. Its success as architecture stems from its ability to salvage the brick from the history of modernism without abandoning the idiosyncratic environment of contemporary China. The building does not subject us to the nostalgic sentimentality that so often accompanies contemporary craft production, nor does it foretell the dystopic vaporization of labor in a postindustrial, neoliberal global economy. Rather, it demonstrates the fundamental and persistent hybridity of our spaces, which are composed of bothobdurate matter and inflated size, brick and balloon.

A FASCINATION WITH ARCHITECTURAL MATERIAL, and with architecture as a materialization of culture and labor, persists in Wang and Lu's most recent commission, the China Academy of Art's satellite campus at Xiangshan. Thanks to the duo's recent celebrity, they were given complete control over the project and total freedom from the direction of school officials, city planners, and local bureaucrats. Rather than building within the project's original site, Hangzhou's massive multi-institution University Town, Wang and Lu chose a 533,333-square-meter area nestled in the surrounding tea-producing hills. The resulting campus includes various classroom buildings, design studios, administrative offices, dormitories, cafeterias, and guesthouses, some of which are still under construction. Each of the main campus structures derives from one of four basic formal types—all focusing on the roof—in an echo of the firm's earlier experimentations with traditional Chinese architecture. These include an exaggerated, sloping roof profile variously paired with wood, brick, or concrete volumes below; deeply overhanging roofs made from thin strips of tile that serve to protect a building's interior spaces from the sun's glare; uneven slabs of concrete and tile placed atop whitewashed studio buildings, around and through which snake elevated walkways; and simple, flat-roofed dormitories wrapped with slender concrete brise-soleil. While the basic geometry and materials of these approaches are reminiscent of various Chinese vernacular structures, here each has been manipulated and expanded into a new, more monumental scale. And while traditional building techniques are employed throughout—rammed-earth, cement cast in bamboo formwork, plain masonry construction—the relationship between form and material remains hermetic. Pressed to function at this massive scale, each material maintains an exaggerated but still typical tectonic logic.

Although the campus is intended to underscore Wang and Lu's commitment to the techniques of traditional architectural production in today's China, the extensive formal repetition and consistently massive scale merely create a simulacrum of traditional Chinese architectural standards. As in Ningbo, there is an obvious degree of attention paid to the material composition of each structure, but here the omnipresence of fragmented yet overtly Chinese building forms and systems overwhelms the visitor, diluting the representational gestures on display.



The generative tensions evident in the Ningbo Museum's brick envelope, on the other hand, embody both the conflicted nature of its own program and the charged relationships between architect and craftsman, building and city, government and citizen. The building presents itself as an authentic act of architectural reclamation amid a grand urban experiment in the artificial. The Xiangshan campus, by contrast, effaces such symbolic ambitions. Rather than actively engaging a building culture in transition, it has been embalmed in an insular, rhetorical display of swooping roofs, exposed beams, and thick earthen walls that signify little more than the architect's own professional retreat.

This retreat seems to be a permanent one. In a recent public lecture at the University of Hong Kong, Wang announced he will no longer be working in the Chinese city, as its uncontrolled sprawl—which he blamed on China's blind embrace of Western planning models after 1949—is not compatible with the explorations he wishes to pursue. His disavowal reveals an understandable but nevertheless disappointing cynicism with respect to China's current architectural condition. If Chinese architects intend to maintain some hold over the international discourse of architectural production today, it will be because they continue to push the operative properties of materials such as brick against the chaotic forces reshaping China's cities. At its best, Wang's work does not so much oppose the gaudy towers and parametric curves that now litter China's skylines as complement them, offering a thoughtful addendum to thirty years of rapid, unfocused urban growth. Just as those buildings benefit from a critical other, Wang's architecture is likewise galvanized by their tension. It is through this exchange, not despite it, that his work illuminates the potential of critical Chinese architecture to recast the form and substance of the country's building culture today.

Cole Roskam is an Assistant Professor of architectural history at the University of Hong Kong.

NOTES

1. Zhu Jianfei, "Opening the Concept of Critical Architecture: The Case of Modern China and the Issue of the State," in *Non West Modernist Past: On Architecture & Modernities*, ed. William S. W. Lim and Jiat-Hwee Chang (Singapore: World Scientific Publications, 2012), 105–16.
2. See Evan Chakroff, "Recasting History: The Ningbo Historic Museum," *Log 24* (2012): 57–62; Thomas de Monchaux, "Toward a Dissident Architecture?," *n+1*, May 25, 2012, www.nplusonemag.com/toward-a-dissident-architecture.
3. Yang Yun, "You xifang xiandai jianzhu xin sichao yinqi de lianxiang," *Jianzhu xuebao* 1 (1980): 26–34.
4. Wu Yonghui, "Shi cong bijiao wenxue kan Zhongguo jianzhu," *Xin Jianzhu* 4 (1985): 41–43.
5. Peter Eisenman, "Editor's Introduction," in *The Architecture of the City*, by Aldo Rossi (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1982), 8.
6. For Jencks, the contrast aptly expresses the tension between the static measurability of traditional tectonic construction and the dematerialized, voluminous expanse of the curtain wall. Jameson subsequently employed the metaphor only in an effort to discredit it altogether, proposing that the globalized scale of land speculation and the related, invisible vectors of international capitalism both render such traditional binary distinctions as form and nonform or plan and space invalid. See Fredric Jameson, *The Cultural Turn: Selected Writings on the Postmodern, 1983–1998* (New York: Verso, 1998), 162–89. See also Charles Jencks, *The New Moderns: From Late to Neo-Modernism* (New York: Rizzoli, 1990), 85.
7. Philip Tinari, "What Does Not Stand Cannot Fall: Wang Wei's Temporary Space," in *Temporary Space*, exh. cat. (25000 Cultural Transmission Center, 2003), n. p.
8. James W. P. Campbell, *Brick: A World History* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2003), 271.

PROJECT

ONE SEMESTER DIVIDED INTO TWO PARTS

Every architecture project is defined not only by what it is, but also by what it is not. To design a building or a city means designing the voids, too. This concept, and that of time, where architecture can be seen as an archeology of transformation are corner stones of our architecture.

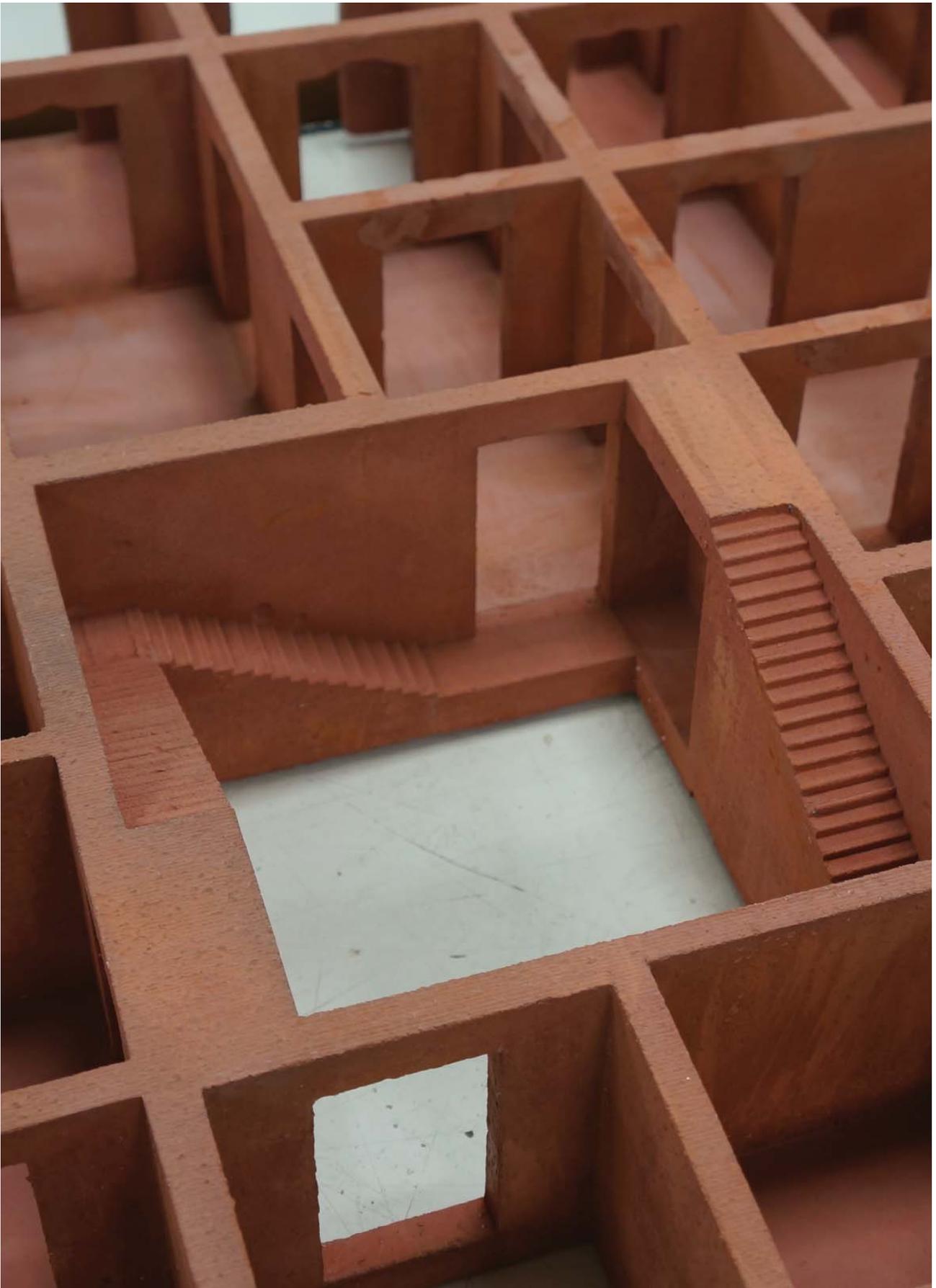
Manuel and Francisco Aires Mateus

The project is divided into 2 parts.

The first part is conceptual and relates to formulating a spatial composition while the second will consist of formulating the architectural project itself

This studio aims at breaking away from the “standard” way of conceiving an architectural idea, i.e. the paradigm of the concept, the reference, the metaphor which ultimately leads to all encompassing abstract concept model imbued with the project's DNA. A model that all will be infatuated with and which will become the nemesis of your final design, as it will be impossible to achieve the same level of seductive ambiguity.

We will dive straight into making models of space; physical models that aim to capture both the atmosphere and physicality of a specific space. You will then study these spaces through drawings and extract from them a logic, give them scale and weight.



VALERIO OLGIATI STUDIO
STUDENT MODEL

PART 1_SPACE_6 WEEKS

Healing Spaces

What is a healing space?
What does healing mean?

At a time when people are becoming more and more anxious in their daily life, healing does not simply relate to visible and diagnosable illnesses. wHealing can relate to Stress, to Physical as well as Psychological pathologies, it can connect to Spiritual and Mental wellbeing.

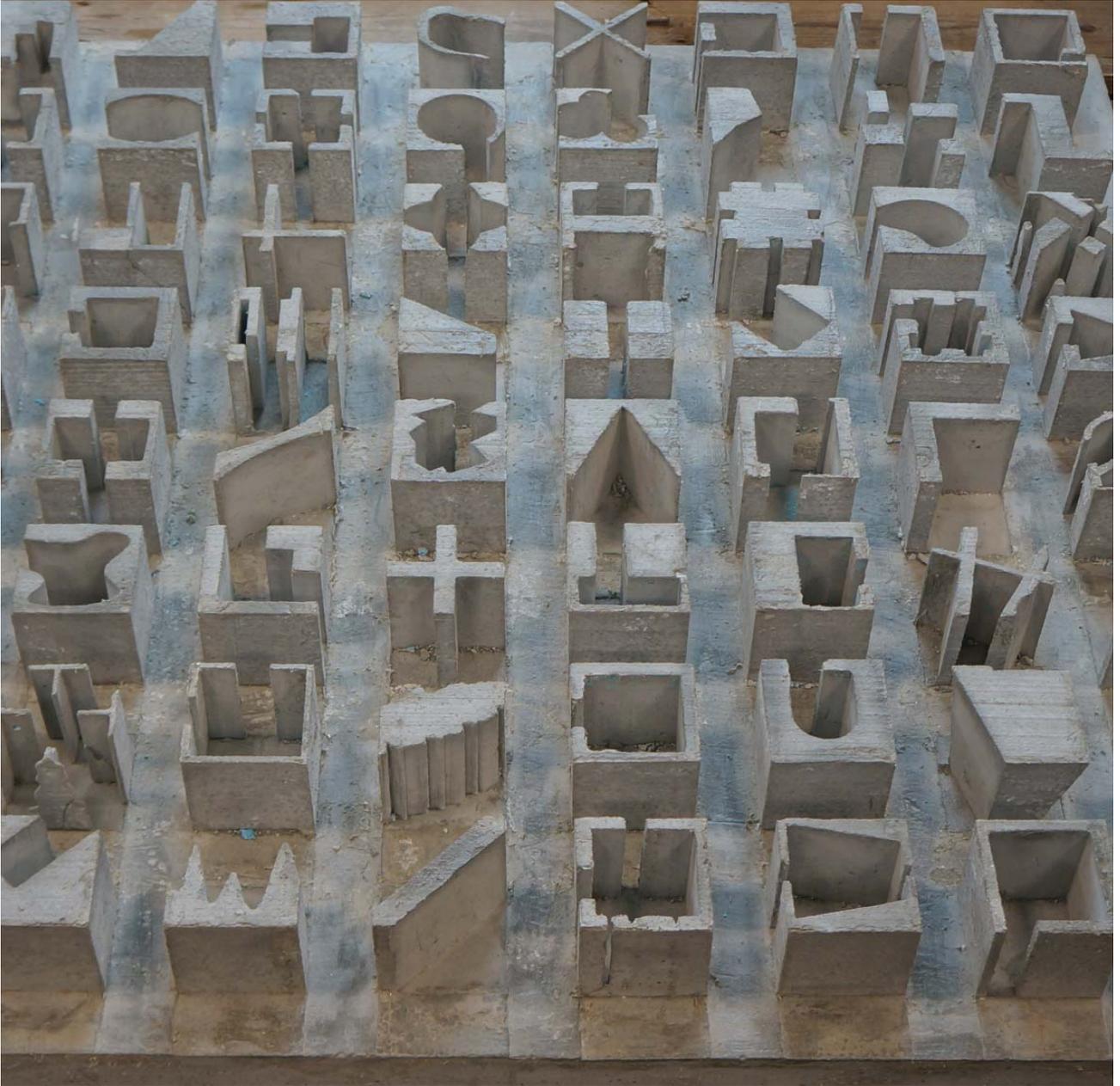
How can space affect healing?
What are the elements that constitute space?
Is space a phenomenon?

Phenomenal: Adj. - relating to or being a phenomenon: as known through the sense rather than through thought or intuition

Research the two artists:
James Turrell and Robert Irwin who work specifically with the medium of Light

Think of the activities that are associated or connected to healing, namely:

Rehabilitation; Physical treatment
Water treatments; Spas
Spiritual retreat; Monastery
Gymnasium; Physical training
Reading; Disconnect from Society
Hospital; Physical Pathologies
Institutions: mental Pathologies



CAST ROOMS
PLASTER MODEL

WEEKS 1-3_CAST SPACES

In this period you will be asked to study what a space of healing is

You will be asked to make three different spaces, with no scale, and only in one material –grey concrete; one model per week.

There is not fixed size, no minimum or maximum dimension

Each model will have to be made with a cast, and will have to be conceived as a negative in order to make the cast.

The models will then have to be photographed in studio conditions using a tripod, in black and white.

WEEKS 3_TRIP TO CHINA

We will visit Hangzhou

WEEKS 4-7_DRAWING OF SPACE

We will have to draw scaled architectural drawings from the models you fabricated.

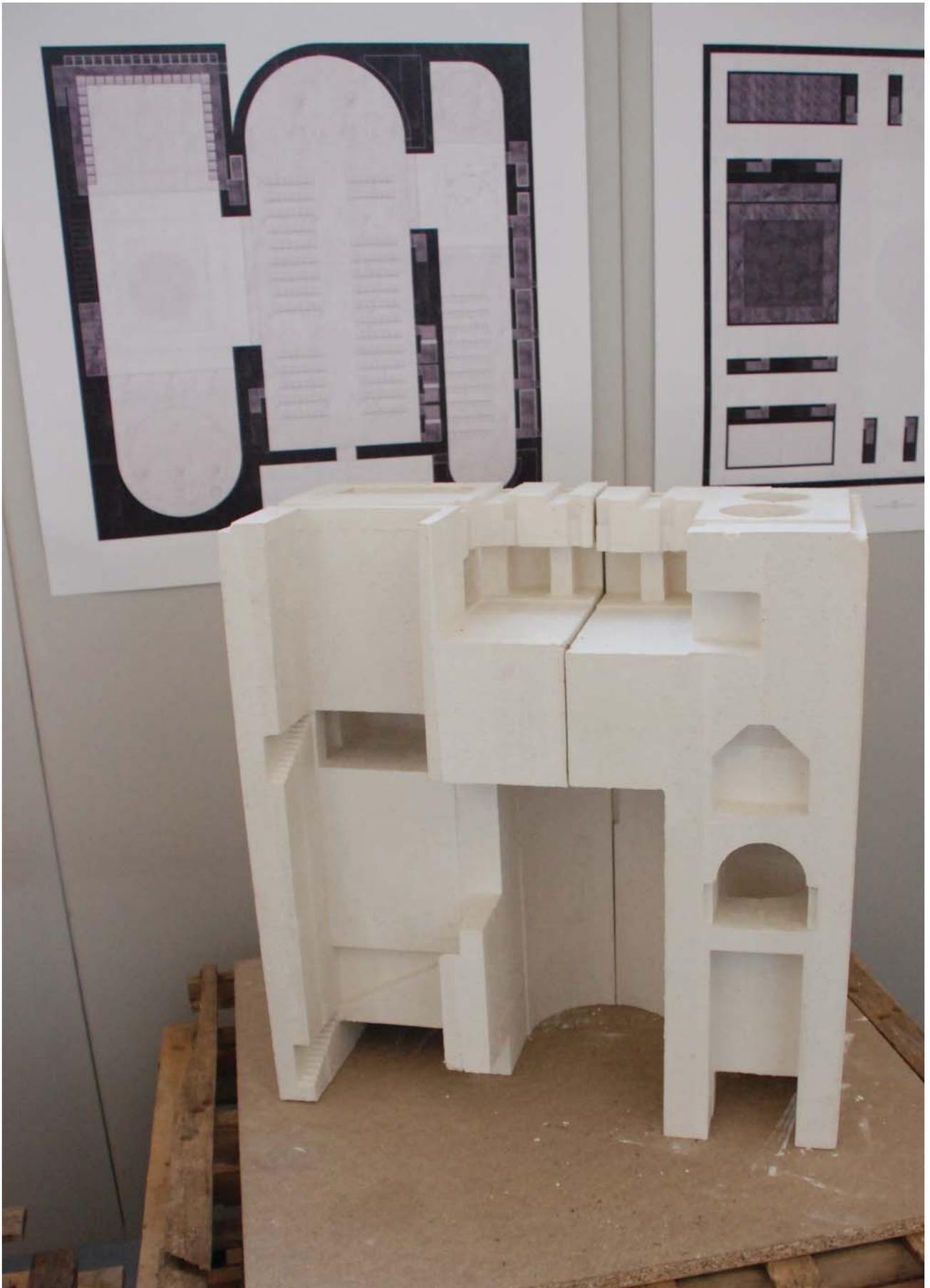
The models will have to be analyzed and given a architectural dimension.

You will have to re model the drawings in 3D, using Rhino
From these virtual models you will have to produce 2D pencil Drawings

WEEK 7_MIDTERM REVIEW

After 7 weeks there will be the Mid-term review

17th April, Thursday 2014



CAST FRAGMENT
FINAL PROJECT

WEEKS 8-16_PROJECT

The idea is to each student to build a fragment that collectively contributes to the whole.

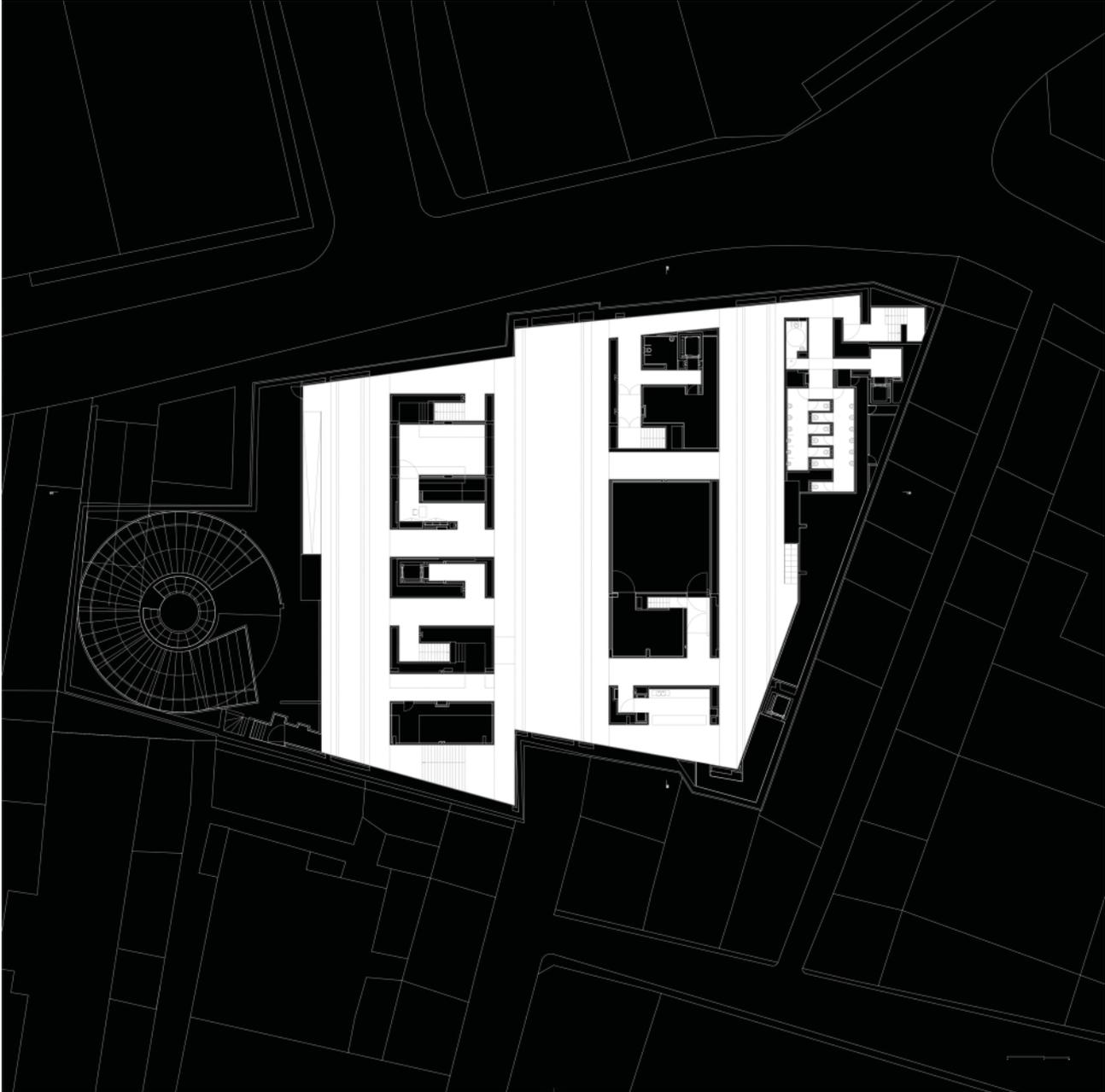
The size of your project cannot exceed a selected area bigger than approximately 30x30m, the size will be finalized once we visit Hangzhou. Your project will be an architectural solution.

You will have to translate your healing spaces into a architectural project. All students will have to incorporate and deal with an existing building or structure.

You will be required to take your project to a 1:50 scale by means of a fragment model



**FINAL PRESENTATION
PANELS AND MODEL**



DRAWINGS
PLAN



PAOLO MENDES DE ROCHA
VENICE BIENNALE 12

WORKING PROCESS

RULES

All material will be in Black and White

All fonts will be Minion Pro

All CAD and pencil drawings will have to be edited in AI

All layouts will have to be made in ID

All work has to be presents in a format of 50x50 cm for Mid and Final presentation.

DELIVERABLES

Mid term review will be 3 models and 9 panels, including analytical drawings of the spaces

Final Presentation will include 16 pales, a site model and a fragment model scale 1:50

REVIEWS

The reviews will be conducted as follows:

Tuesday group presentation

Friday Individual

TRAVEL

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

DATES

The Trip to Hangzhou will take place between Thursday 20th March and Tuesday 25th of March 1, 2014.

VISA

All students will need a Chinese Visa ASAP.

You will have to give your passports this week to my TA Suna Kim to organize the group Visa

AIR TICKET

We will fly to Shanghai, my TA will organize the trip with a group ticket.

BUDGET

The provisional budget for the whole trip will be as follows:

Travel by plane ticket, Incheon > Shanghai = 400,000 W

Train from Shanghai to Hangzhou = 100,000 W

Bus to visit specific buildings = 100,000 W

Hotel Accommodation = 300,000 W

TOTAL 900,000 W per student

The school as agreed to support approximately 50% of the costs, with a maximum of 30 students, should the students exceed this amount this % might reduce

TRIP

TRIP PROVISIONAL INTINARY

20th March, Thursday
Incheon > Shanghai
Shanghai > Hangzhou by train.
Accommodation in Hangzhou

21st March, Friday
Visit Hangzhou, find site
Visit the Xiangshan Campus, Chinese Academy of Arts, designed by Amateur
Architecture

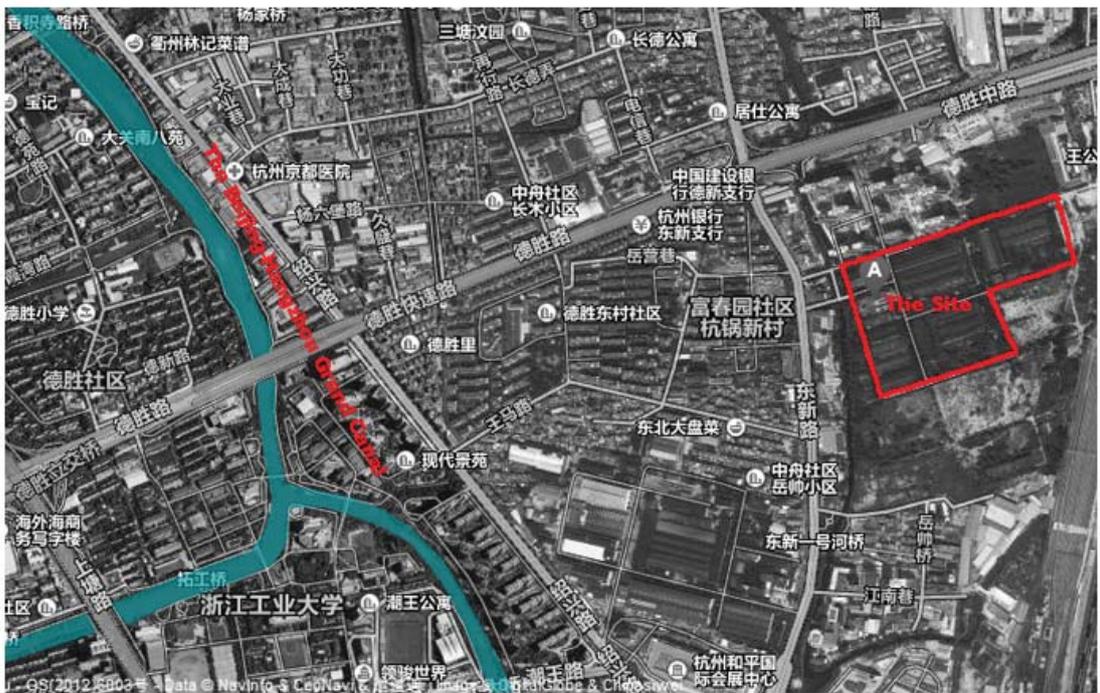
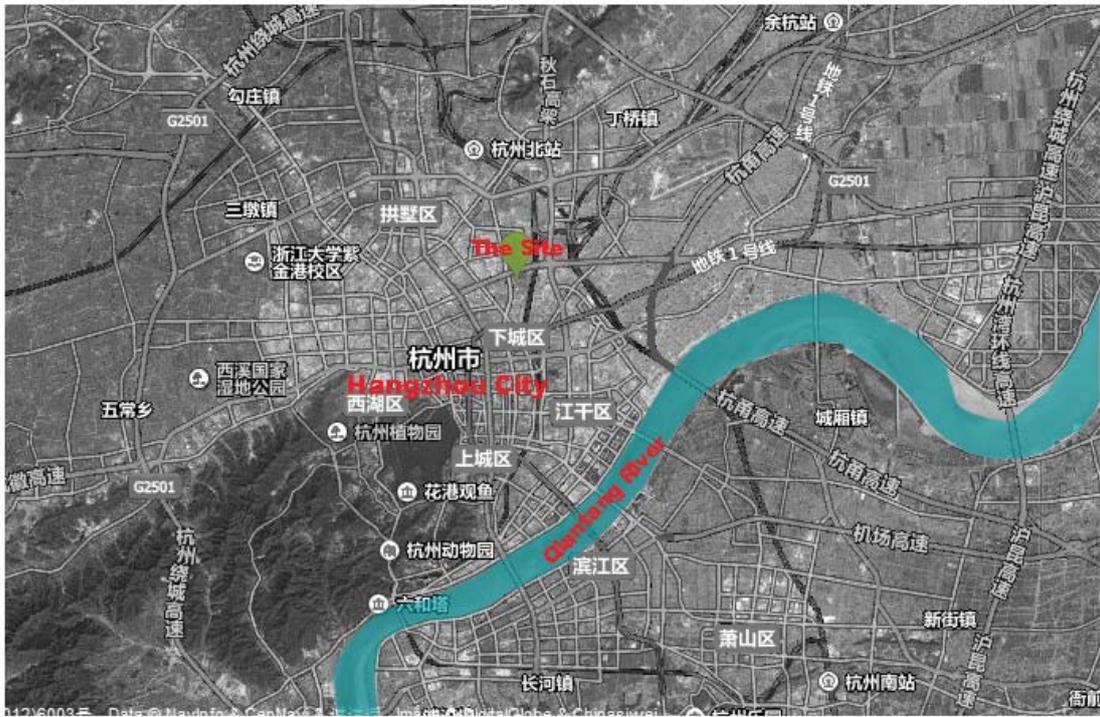
22nd March, Saturday
Hangzhou and site again
Visit the Liangshu Cultural museum by David Chipperfield

23rd March, Sunday
Visit Ningbo by bus
Ningbo History Museum, by Amateur Architecture
Ningbo Contemporary Art Museum, by Amateur Architecture
Travel back to Shanghai, where we will sleep

24th March, Monday
Visit Shanghai
Visit Rockbund project and art museum by David Chipperfield
Night in Shanghai

25th March, Tuesday
Travel Back to Seoul

SITE



POTENTIAL SITE
HANGZHOU



POTENTIAL SITE
HANGZHOU



POTENTIAL SITE
HANGZHOU

THE END